

METROPOLITAN DADE COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD

DESIGNATION REPORT - INDIVIDUAL SITE OR DISTRICT SUMMARY

Site Name Stonegate

Designation No. 8105

Site Address 7400 Ponce de Leon Road

Date of Designation December 17, 1981

Owner and Address Casper C. Hagner, 7400 Ponce de Leon Road, Miami, FL. 33143

Site Location - Legal description or district boundaries (see attached map):  
Section 31, Township 54, Range 41  
East 1/2 of Lot 2 of the Kingsley's Subdivision (1-41).

Dade County Historic Survey Findings:  
Built between 1923 and 1927. The survey rated  
Stonegate a 1 in architecture, 2 in history and  
1 in context of the surrounding area.

Other Surveys:        H.A.B.S.  
       Natl. Reg.        H.A.E.R.  
Other: None

Title Verification (attach copy): Book 2675 Page No. 387 Deed Type Warranty

Current Zoning (describe): EU 1 - 1 acre estate zoning or 1 family residential per acre.

Current Use (describe): Residential with several apartments in the house or in various cottages on the property.

Current Condition (describe): The buildings and grounds appear to be in excellent condition.

Physical Description of Site (attach 1 or 2 photos):

The main building at Stonegate, is situated on a large lot set almost 300 ft. from the road. Large palms and oaks surround the house. Along the road is an oolitic stone wall approximately 3 ft. in height with an impressive arched gate at its center, hence the name of the property. On the N.E. end of the wall is a small two story, three bay oolitic stone cottage that contains an enclosed front porch and many original architectural elements. On the south end of the wall is a small fountain with Madonna overlooking a lush natural physiographic feature.

The most prominent building on the lot is essentially a two story oolitic stone masonry structure with main facade composed of nine bays. A prominent front entrance is articulated by a large rock arch with keystone leading to a porch with another, smaller rock arch as the entrance doorway. Immediately adjacent to the entryway is a large two story stone chimney which exhibits masonry detailing. To the north of the entryway, set back from the two bay entrance facade is a one story tiled roof section with four stone arches similar to the entrance arch. South of the main block of the house is a two story oolitic stone addition. The house has an irregular plan with a tiled parapet on the main facade. This masonry construction residence is an outstanding example of masonry vernacular Mediterranean architecture. It is noteworthy for its stylistic features, Mediterranean details,

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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Significance - Brief summary including documentary evidence that indicates the historical, architectural or archeological significance of the site.

The significance of this residence, known as Stonegate, lies not so much in its history, as in its unique architectural style and use of native oolitic limestone. This structure was built by Oliver Sollit between 1923 and 1927. Sollit was a retired contractor from Chicago who purchased the property in 1923 from the John Opsahl Trading Co. He first completed construction of an eight room gatehouse (still on the property) and then began work on the larger main house. When the 1926 hurricane struck part of the main house, which was still under construction at the time, it was so damaged that it was left incomplete. When Casper C. Hagner bought the place in 1946, he completed the unfinished part of the house. Mr. Hagner still owns and resides at Stonegate. Over the years he has made many improvements to the property. They all appear to be in keeping with the original character of the estate.

(Use additional sheets if necessary)

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Bibliographic References:

Dade County, Florida (Miami). County Recorder's Office. Abstract Book 1A, p. 207.  
(Unpublished source).

Gabriel, Patricia. The Villager's Book of Outstanding Homes of Miami. University  
of Miami Press, Coral Gables, 1975.

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Special Standards for Certificate of Appropriateness:

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Impacts - Impact of the designation on proposed public improvements, renewal projects or  
private development.



Draft Resolution Designating the Property:

RESOLUTION: Stonegate

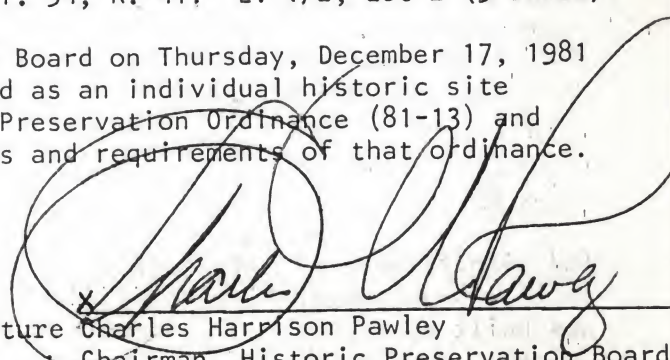
Whereas, Stonegate is an outstanding example of Mediterranean vernacular architecture in Dade County, and,

Whereas, the preservation of Stonegate has provided and will continue to provide tangible proof of Dade County's architectural heritage, and

Whereas, the preservation of historic landmarks is in the best interest of Dade County and its citizens, and

Whereas, Stonegate is located in Section 31, T. 54, R. 41, E. 1/2, Lot 2 (5 acres). A.E. Kingsley Corr. Sub. (1-41), now therefore

Be it resolved that the Historic Preservation Board on Thursday, December 17, 1981 has designated Stonegate at 7400 Ponce de Leon Road as an individual historic site pursuant to the Metropolitan Dade County Historic Preservation Ordinance (81-13) and that Stonegate is subject to all rights, privileges and requirements of that ordinance.

Designation is approved as evidenced by the signature  Charles Harrison Pawley  
Chairman, Historic Preservation Board

Staff Recommendation:

Staff of the Historic Preservation Board recommends the designation of Stonegate as an historic site.

CONTINUATION SHEET:

Physical Description:

location and surrounding landscaping, and its unusually large size. The use of native rock material and its adaptability to the area's climate through landscaping also contribute to the significance of the building.

METROPOLITAN DADE COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD

RESOLUTION: Stonegate, 7400 Ponce de Leon Road (8105)

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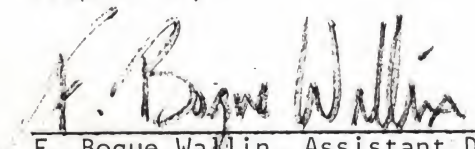
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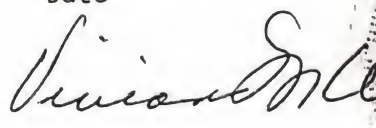
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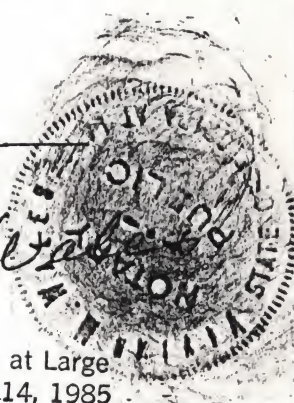
  
Charles Harrison Pawley  
Chairman, Historic Preservation Board

Prepared by:

  
F. Bogue Wallin, Assistant Director  
Historic Preservation Division

December 23, 1981  
Date

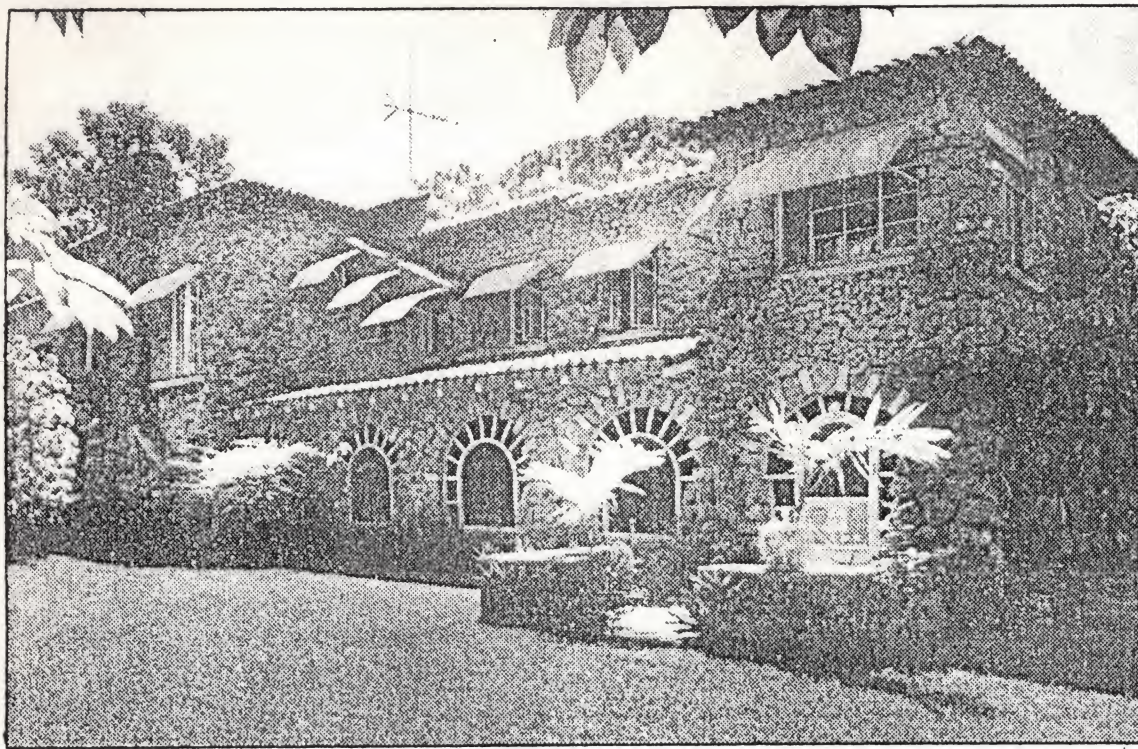
  
Notary Public, State of Florida at Large  
My Commission Expires Sept. 14, 1985



RECORDED IN OFFICIAL RECORDS BOOK  
OF DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA.  
RECORD VERIFIED

**RICHARD P. BRINKER,**  
CLERK CIRCUIT COURT





MARY LOU FOY / Miami Herald Staff

The historic Stonegate house was to be demolished next month.

## Historic S. Dade home saved from demolition

# Parks to be win r

By PAUL SHUKOVSKY  
Herald Staff Writer

Forty-one small parks scattered around Dade that have been declared unnecessary and earmarked for sale might get a reprieve after Monday's county budget hearing.

The parks department, forced to cut costs by a tight budget, decided to sell the small parcels they considered too expensive to maintain.

But when lame-duck Commissioner Clara Oesterle heard about the plan to sell the parks, she said, "As long as I'm here, they are not going to be sold." Oesterle was defeated in the election earlier this month and will leave office in mid-October.

She huddled with Commissioner Barbara Carey on Thursday and decided money to cover the cost of maintaining the parks should be added to the budget at a hearing scheduled for Monday.

If that plan fails, Oesterle



By GEOFFREY BIDDULPH  
Herald Staff Writer

The owner of a historic South Dade house planned to demolish the structure in early October until his neighbor complained to the county's Historical Preservation Board.

Emil Gould, owner of Stonegate, which was declared a historic site in 1981, was granted a permit to demolish the building in April. But after his neighbor, Shirley Loeffler, told the preservation board of Gould's plans, the agency investigated the case and informed the county's building and zoning department that Stonegate should not be demolished.

The county revoked Gould's permit last week.

Gould said he made an honest mistake. He said he only planned to demolish the building at 7400 Ponce de Leon Blvd. because it needs hundreds of thousands of dollars of repairs. He wants to put Stonegate's five-acre parcel of land together with a neighboring five-acre parcel and sell the package to a developer for \$3.5 million. Gould envisioned 10 homes on the site.

Ivan Rodriguez, director of the Metro-Dade Historical Preservation Division, said the issue is worrisome because the county's regulations intended to protect historic sites almost failed.

"It must have fallen through the cracks," Rodriguez said.

Stonegate, built in the 1920s, is the largest house in the county built from oolitic limestone, commonly known as coral rock. As a historic site, it is protected from major structural changes.

## ABOUT STONEGATE

Stonegate was built between 1923 and 1927 by Oliver Sollit, a retired contractor from Chicago, who purchased the five-acre parcel in 1923. Sollit first built an eight-room gate house, then the main house. The 1926 hurricane damaged the main house, which was left incomplete until 1946 when Caspar Hagner bought the property and completed it. Hagner owned the house until 1983, when he sold it to Emil Gould for \$682,500.

The house is made from hundreds of large rocks of oolitic limestone. The stone is commonly called coral rock. It is the largest home in Dade County made entirely of oolitic limestone.

The complex is composed of three structures, the main house, the garage and the gate house. The main house has nine bedrooms and eight bathrooms.

Under normal procedures, Gould would have to bring his request to demolish the building before the historical preservation board, Rodriguez said. If the board allowed demolition, Gould would then ask for a permit from the county's building and zoning department.

In this case, Gould bypassed the preservation board and went straight to the county's building and zoning department. Gould said the mistake was not intentional.

"I thought the only requirement was that I wait six months before demolishing the building," Gould said. Gould said he was waiting until early October to tear it down.

Gould said he is not sure whether he will try again to destroy the building. Rodriguez said he will recommend that the preservation board not allow demolition.

Terry Lunn, permit law en-

forcement division chief for the building and zoning department, said the department usually does not grant permits to tear down historic sites.

"This was one of the first buildings to be declared a historical site and was not listed in our records. We had no way of knowing," Lunn said. Lunn said the department began computerizing its records in February.

Rodriguez, who said he is alarmed by the mistake, said he will make a presentation in the next few weeks to the staff of the building and zoning department on all of the county's 85 historical sites.

Loeffler, the neighbor, said she is happy the building is not likely to be torn down soon. Gould lets her use Stonegate's empty rooms as a painting studio.

"I've lived in the area for 22 years, and I've always liked this beautiful building. I hope it won't be destroyed," Loeffler said.

Carey said they would introduce resolution to prevent the sale of parks at the commission meeting Thursday.

Although many of the parcels set for sale are undeveloped sites underneath high-voltage lines, there are seven park shade trees, benches and grounds in otherwise-blighted City neighborhoods.

The proposal to sell the parcels made without consulting residents or conducting formal surveys, much use they get, said Bokins, assistant director for services of the Metro-Dade Park and Recreation Department.

It is the first sale of developed parks in Perkins' memory. Lunn worked for the department most three decades.

But putting money into the parks to maintain the parks for the coming year does not guarantee that they won't be sold eventually.

The parks department has \$133,000 to maintain all 41 parks, said Dick Jones, assistant to the department director. But the sum will be negotiated by the department, the county manager's office and Metro budget, said Steve Spratt, assistant director of the budget.

Assistant County Manager Ojeda said: "I just do not see this point undertaking the sale of park land. It's not something I'm considering."

But Ojeda said the county manager has yet to review the matter.

And Spratt said each park should be studied on a case-by-case basis since there may be parks that should be declared surplus.

Before the parks can be sold,